Accredition of the State Seed Certification Agency

1959. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Maharashtra have submitted a proposal to APEDA for accredition of the State seed certification agency for organic farming;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what action Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) An application was received by the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Ministry of Commerce & Industry from Maharashtra State Seed Certification Agency, Akola in January, 2005 for accreditation as a certification body for organic farming.

(c) APEDA has requested the Government of Maharashtra to develop certification programmes and manuals in line with the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) requirements. APEDA is awaiting a feeback from the Government of Maharashtra.

Dryland farming

1960. SHRI S.S. CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a new scheme known as Enhancing Sustainability of Dryland Farming Systems has been launched by Government.

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have any proposal to extend this scheme to other States; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (d) The Government has formulated a new scheme on Enhancing Sustainability of Dryland Farming Systems to address the issues of dryland areas of semi arid and arid regions. Initially, the scheme is to be implemented on pilot basis in 16 districts (4 each in the States of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharasthra and Karnataka) having annual rainfall of < 700 mm and irrigation coverage < 30% of net sown area after its approval.

Cold storages in Andhra Pradesh

1961. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposal for setting up of cold storages in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken thereon, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise. However, National Horticulture Board (NHB) is implementing a scheme "Capital Investment Subsidy for Construction/Expansion/Modernization of Cold Storage/Storages of Horticulture Produce" under which 40 cold storage involving 1.97 lakh tonnes additional capacity for horticulture crops have been created in Andhra Pradesh since 1999-2000.

MSP for pulses

1962. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to prescribe minimum support price for pulses;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?